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The Pulpit

A SERMON BY THE REV. IRA W. HENDERSON

Subject: The Faultless Christ.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—Preaching at the Irving Square Presbyterian Church on the theme "The Faultless Christ," the Rev. Ira Wemmell Henderson, pastor took as his text Luke 23:4, "I find no fault in this Man." He said:

This honest answer of Pontius Pilate to the statements of the lying multitude is the testimony of all men who study, with insight and understanding, the career of Jesus Christ. Put to any test and judged by whatsoever standard you may will, the Master of us all will be found without flaw, fault or spot. Measured by any rule you may suggest, Jesus meets requirements to the full. Does your ideal of manhood demand more than mortal men reveal of virtue and of worth, there the Savior stands to supply your soul's desire. Do you ask for weight of mind or depth of thought, who can outmatch Jesus? Do you seek for clarity of vision and for spiritual force—there is none like Him. For downright manliness and for that hallowedness of heart which marked Him as divine, none can compare with the Son of God. Each of us must declare Him faultless, all of us must admire and should imitate His perfectness of life. Pontius Pilate pronounced Jesus free of guilt after a careful and discussion of Jesus' regal claim. In this day and hour of intellectual test, after careful analysis and close scrutiny of His life and claims, glory in His perfectness and hail Him Son of God and avowed King. Shall we not do honor for a moment to this self-declared Messiah, who by right is crowned as King?

To the faultlessness which Pilate ascribed to Him let us add the testimony of St. John, who has preached Him as the fullness of truth and of grace.

Faultless, the possessor and the revealer of divine truth, powerful in His words of grace, as was our Lord. For His excellency in these three shining virtues let us pay Him homage now.

Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this Man." Faultlessness is perfection. To be without fault is to free from defect. As the Italians would phrase it, to be faultless is to be lacking in nothing. Jesus was a faultless man—only such could have been the mouthpiece of the unerring oracles which the Savior brought from God. Faultlessness, which is but another name for holiness, was apart from His nature. Jesus made no pretensions. He was just what He claimed to be. Sincerity ran through His every word and made eloquent His every deed. Deceit and deception were not in His line. Often the Lord sent His truth home veiled with well chosen words. But at no time did He use deceit to gain His ends. True enough it is, that plain statement of the truth made Him so many enemies at times, but it is a wonder that, now and then, He did not pare the truth to suit those who were His friends. But no, the Christ was not on earth to trim or to cut the truth to suit those whom it hardest hit. His mission was to preach the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, as coming from the mouth of God. The truth we was to trimmer. Oftentimes His words laid bare the soul secrets of the men to whom He spoke. Now and then, He cut them to the very quick. But because their hearts were hard was not His fault. His was the blameless, faultless heart that there were the hearts that were dead in sin and to shame. Without guile and without guilt is the judgment of the multitude of hearts upon this man in whom Pilate found no fault.

John tells us in the verse which we just read that Jesus was full of grace. Grace is graciousness, lovableness. Coming to us as the dispenser of the love of God freely bestowed upon us, in this Jesus exemplifies in His own life that gracious loveliness which He preaches. Pure, noble, upright, kind and true, Christ is a joy to eye and soul alike. To gaze into His face must have been to walk with God to those who understood. And those to-day within the unhindered influence of the Master may bear upon their own faces the marks of inward loveliness of life. The power of transforming grace will change not only the spiritual nature of a man, but also will remold and transfigure the very features of his face. A countenance that is hard with sin will mellow into tenderness and peace through the yielding of the soul to the Savior. That vision of the